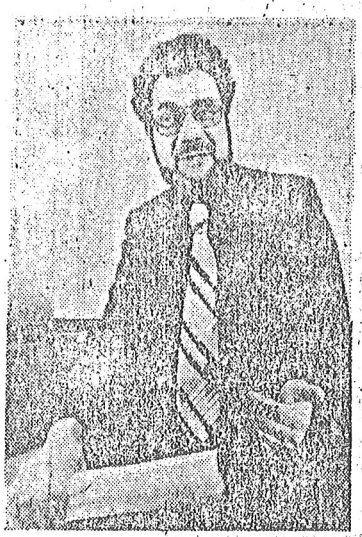
Mark Lane Addresses Full House Here

'Probe of JFK Assassination a Must'



Mark Lane
(Staff Photo by David Sandell)

By PHIL HASLANGER
Of The Capital Times Staff

Mark Lane, the attorney who has spent the last 11 years investigating the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, told a packed house at the Capitol City Theatre Tuesday night that pursuing the assassination should be "the number one priority of America now."

"Until we find out about that information, we will be doomed to relive it and relive it," Lane said.

When he told the more than 2,000 people filling the theater that candidates for President who come to Madison should not be allowed to talk about other issues until they make an "absolute commitment" to investigate the assassination, he drew the strongest applause of the evening.

The reception Lane and Robert Katz of the Assassination Information Bureau received during their day-long visit to Madison reflected both the renewed interest in the Kennedy assassination and the shift in the public perception of it during the past few years.

Mayor Paul Soglin noted at an afternoon news conference that five to 10 years ago, people looking into assassination plots were "basically viewed as on the lunatic fringe." Today they are being taken more and more seriously, he said.

The afternoon session for Madison dignitaries drew Soglin, Attorney General Bronson LaFollette, Assembly Speaker Norman Anderson, state Reps. Midge Miller and David Clarenbach, District Attorney H. J. Lynch, Police Chief David Couper and two police inspectors, a raft of lawyers and a variety of city staff people.

Couper was back for the evening presentation, and the audience included several aldermanic candidates, former City Attorney Ed Conrad, conspiracy believers and conspiracy skeptics.

Couper and Lynch, who both have familiarity with investigating criminal cases, said after the presentations that they give credence to the possibility that more than one assassin was involved. Soglin and LaFollette had said earlier they thought the investigation should be reopened.

"Unless they doctored the film somehow, I don't see how he could have been hit from behind," Couper said.

The film is the home movie of the assassination taken by Abraham Zapruder. Time-Life Inc. bought the rights to the film and, although Life ran still shots from it at one time, the entire film has never been released by that organization, Lane said.

The copy shown in Madison Tuesday was a "bootlegged" copy obtained from a man named Bob Groden, Katz said. Groden will not say where he got the film, according to Katz.

The heart of Lane's theory on the assassination is that Lee Harvey Oswald could not possibly have inflicted six wounds on

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...Kennedy

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Kennedy and then Texas Gov. John Connally plus injure a bystander with only three shots — the most he could have fired in 5.6 seconds of shooting.

The film shows the president motorcade rounding the corner in Dallas by the School Book Depository, where Oswald allegedly waited in a sixth floor window.

As Kennedy's car emerges from behind a sign, he is shown starting to clutch his throat. One and eight-tenths seconds later, Connally grimaces in pain. Then, in a moment that brought gasps from each audience, Kennedy's head explodes as he lurches back in the seat.

Lane contends that the backward motion could only have been caused by a bullet

fired from in front of Kennedy. He said the Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination, did not try to explain the backward motion of Kennedy, but simply ignored it.

The Warren Commission explained the multiple wounds by maintaining that three shots were fired and one bullet entered Kennedy's back, came out through his throat, pierced Connally's ribs, shattered his wrist and embedded itself in his leg.

Lane mocked that explanation as he gave this version of it, which is paraphrased here:

Oswald could have shot at Kennedy when the motorcade slowed down to turn the corner, but being a good sport, he waited until it was speeding up and moving away from him.

His "magic bullet" enters Kennedy's neck six inches above where Kennedy was wounded in the back and leaves through Kennedy's throat, leaving behind the clear markings of an entrance wound. Then it "hangs around in mid-air for 1.8 second" until it saw Connally, when it went through his fourth and fifth ribs, emerged leaving a gaping wound in his side, saw his right wrist and turned 90 degrees to shatter it and finally plopped into Connally's leg where it stayed until Kennedy was given cardiac massage and the bullet fell out of his back.

Lane quoted the chief counsel for the Warren report as saying that "if you cannot believe the single-bullet theory, then you must reject the entire Warren Commission report."

Lane clearly rejects it, not only on the single-bullet theory, but on numerous other grounds.

He said he believes that **"every member of the Warren Commission is an accessory after the fact to the assassination of President John Kennedy"** and called the report **"the most public and open cover-up of a crime in the history of this country."**

Lane's Citizens Commission for Inquiry is now demanding, under the Freedom of Information Act, all the documents gathered by the Warren Commission. He is optimistic about getting them.

That, coupled with increased public skepticism about government and congressional inquiries into the Central Intelligence Agency — which Lane says may have been involved — have given Lane hope.

"After 11 years of working in this area," he said, **"I believe in 1975 we are going to find out who killed John Kennedy and why he was killed and why the government kept this information from the people."**